Dear Jerry, 4/2/92

Thanks for the interesting Ball "JFK's Big Moment" article from the New Yorl Review. He reviews Beschloss and Dino Brugione's "Eyeball to Eyeball" book on the Cuban Missile Crisis saying virtually nothing about the latter, which I regret, and uses the review as a vehicle for very interesting recollections.

I do not recall that Ball reflects any appreciation of the difference in JFK and his policies and intentions following the missile crisis. An example of how this comes out in what he says is that he actually says that what JFK allegedly said at ~~or after~~ the Vienna conference about Viet Nam is what he had in mind and represented his policies at the time he was killed.

I am sure he is wrong in saying that JFK approved assassinating Diem in, without any personal comment, quoted Reston as saying he "cooperated in approving Diem's murder." He "cooperated" in the coup, not the assassination.

Some of this is very worthwhile, like quoting General Taylor on a war in Viet Nam being a pushover. Ball uses this to say that he knew better and said it and was right.

When it gets to recollection and its dependabilty, a problem for all of us, Ball concludes with, "I remember in my youth a cartoon strip in which a skeptical character contimually asks, 'Vas you dere, Charlie?'" It is my recollection that this was a radio show, not a cartoon strip, and that the name was pronounced, "SHarlie."

In the use he makes of quoting the Taylor report Ball as much as says that JFK introduced out "advisers" into Viet Nam. He greatly increased their number but they were, as I recall, already there when he took office.

I'm surprised that it took the Review until its 2/13/92 issue to review Beschloss.

H